



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 8, 2022

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
The Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

As Members of Congress, we write you today to ask you to use the authority granted to you under §212(d)(5) and 8 U.S.C. §1182(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to reunite American citizens and legal permanent residents (LPRs) with their families who have been displaced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Reuniting Americans with their family members as quickly as possible is a strong step toward protecting the family members of Americans from the violence and humanitarian crisis created by Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

As of today, almost two million Ukrainians and other nationals, including but not limited to individuals displaced from Belarus and foreign students, residing in Ukraine have been forced to flee into neighboring countries and roughly 200,000 have been internally displaced. Information is still surfacing, but reports indicate that the Russian military has already committed numerous human rights violations and war crimes in the country. The conditions created by the Kremlin's illegal and heinous war against Ukraine has created an extreme humanitarian crisis in Europe. Some individuals in Ukraine may have been at various stages of processing for immigration status in the United States but were unable to complete the process due to the current dangers of remaining in Ukraine. A vast many others may be eligible to immigrate to the United States but had never applied because they had no intentions to leave Ukraine and relocate to the United States prior to the Russian military invasion. Further, many of the Ukrainian refugees and internationally displaced people (IDPs) are the relatives of American citizens and LPRs who may be eligible to file a family based I-130 petition on their behalf to let these displaced or refugee family members join them in the United States. However, in some instances, beneficiaries of these petitions are required to wait in a foreign country for a visa to be granted while this petition is processed, with wait times lasting up to 15 years. We believe this timeline is unsustainable due to the current humanitarian crisis. To meet the current need, we believe a new Ukraine-based program, allowing these eligible family members to be paroled into the United States while waiting for their visas to be granted, would be the appropriate response to this humanitarian crisis. This action would be similar to the Haitian Family Reunification Program created by the Obama Administration in 2014 and would maintain the integrity of our immigration system.

The Haitian Family Reunification Program was established to allow certain eligible U.S. citizens and LPRs to apply for parole for their family members in Haiti. Under the Ukrainian version of this program, eligible family members of American citizens and LPRs in Ukraine or displaced from Ukraine could be paroled into the United States before their immigrant visa priority dates were

granted. Once in the United States, these noncitizens could apply for discretionary work authorization while they wait for their I-130 petitions to be processed to then apply for lawful permanent resident status. This program would not allow Ukrainian family members to bypass the American immigration system but would allow for a quicker way to remove these individuals from a truly life-threatening situation. We additionally support the eligibility of legal service providers, houses of worship, and nonprofit organizations as sponsors, given that some seeking parole may not have known family members in the United States.

Mr. Secretary, as the humanitarian crisis grows, we must react. At this critical juncture, we stand ready to work with the Administration to act on our solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We believe that this program should be initiated for Ukrainian nationals as quickly as possible and should allow for new I-130 petitions not yet filed to come within its ambit for eligible Ukrainians.

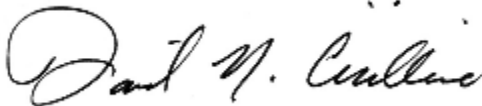
Sincerely,



William R. Keating
Chair
Subcommittee on Europe, Energy,
the Environment, and Cyber



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress
Member of the Congressional Ukraine
Caucus



David N. Cicilline
Chair of the House Judiciary
Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial
and Administrative Law



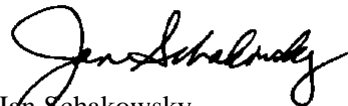
Brian Fitzpatrick
Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee for Europe, Energy,
the Environment and Cyber
Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus




Mike Quigley
Member of Congress
Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus




Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress





Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

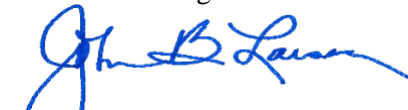

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Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes
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John B. Larson
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Adriano Espaillat
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Judy Chu
Member of Congress

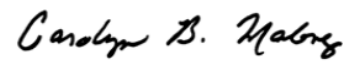

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Earl Blumenauer
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Carolyn B. Maloney
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Jim Costa
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James P. McGovern
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Ayanna Pressley
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Andy Levin
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Ilhan Omar
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Dina Titus
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



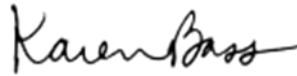
Kathy Manning
Member of Congress



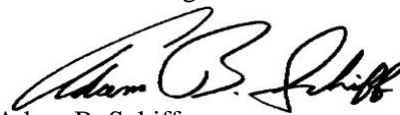
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
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